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SYRIAC VERSION OF EPISTLE OF KING ABGAR TO JESUS.

By Professor Isaac H. Hall, Ph. D.,
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The following Syriac Version of the Apocryphal Epistle of King Abgar to Jesus, and Jesus' reply, is from a parchment leaf lately sent to the writer by the Rev. William Hayes Ward, D. D., who obtained it, with a number of other fragments, from a monastery in the Târ in Mesopotamia. The leaf is 9½x6½ inches in dimension, is written in very old Estrangela in two columns to the page, each column 7 to 7½ inches high and 2 to 2½ inches wide. One corner of the leaf is mutilated, causing a few small gaps in the writing. As to age, it seems to belong to the eighth century, but it may be older by a century more. The other matter on the leaf is the end of a homily on the love of poverty, or, as the matter itself seems to interpret the title, love to the poor and wretched.

The copy here given corresponds with the manuscript, line for line, letter for letter, and point for point; except that some of the points may be faded out, and those I do not venture to supply. In line 59, however, the scribe added above the line, as a correction to the last word of the line, a waw between the olaf and pi. This, as at least unnecessary, I have not copied.

Lines 1-4 are at the end of the second column on the first page of the leaf; lines 5-35 occupy the first column of the second page, and lines 36 to 66 occupy the last column.

Lines 1-5, with an undecipherable word in line 6, as well as the last two words of line 39, with lines 40-42, are in red.

In line 5, the parchment is wholly gone as far as the word that appears in the copy below; in line 6, the mutilated undecipherable word in red at the beginning is followed by a place torn away, so that the body of the Epistle here begins in the middle of a word. But it probably began مملا، with only three more Syriac letters to be supplied. The gap in lines 7 and 8 I do not venture to supply.

All that has hitherto appeared in print of these Epistles, in the Syriac version, is to be found in Cureton's Ancient Syriac Documents (London, Williams & Norgate, 1864), and Phillips' Doctrine of Addai (London, Trübner, 1876); but I have not access to those works, and cannot tell how they agree with this text. But they mention Addai (i.e. Thaddeus) as the disciple sent, or to be sent, by Jesus to Abgar; while this fragment clearly names Judas instead.

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   مملا مملا
   مملا مملا

5.  
   . . .
Syriac Version of Epistle of King Abgar to Jesus. 233
IIEBRAICA.

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55.
The same day that I received them I sent a translation of these Epistles to The Independent; but in my haste I missed some letters, so that that translation has here a few corrections.

One word in the title of the Letter of Abgar, rendered "blessed" below, is evidently the common abbreviation for that word, though not specially marked as such in the manuscript. If not an abbreviation, it is to be rendered "good."

The following is a translation; italicizing the words that are written in red in the manuscript:

"Begins the Letter of King Abgar; Abgar, the black, Prince of the region, to Jesus the blessed Redeemer who appeared...of Jerusalem.... [Whereas it has been heard by me....and of the healings [wrought (?)] by thy hands, and not with perfumes and medicaments! For as it was said thou makest the blind to see, and the lame to walk, and cleansest the lepers, and castest out the unclean spirits and devils, and healest them that are led captive in lingering diseases, and thou raisest the dead; and since all these things are rumored of thee, I thought that thou wert one of the crowned (?) that thou had descended from God from heaven, and [therefore] thou doest these things; or that certainly thou wert of God and [therefore] thou doest these things. For this reason, therefore, I wrote, entreating from thee that thou wouldst be persuaded and come to me, and heal this sorrow (or, disease) which I have. For also I have heard that the Jews murmur against thee, and desire to vex thee. But I have a city, small and beautiful, that is enough for two.

"Copy of the matters that were written from Jesus by the hand of Hanania, tabellarius, to Abgar, prince of the region. Blessed is he that believeth in me, though he hath not seen me; for it is written concerning me that they who see me will not believe in me, and they who have not seen me shall believe and live. But as to that which thou didst write me, that I should come to thee; it is fitting that I should fulfill here everything for which I was sent; and after that I shall have fulfilled [it], then I shall be taken up to him who sent me. And when I shall have been taken up, I will send to thee one of my disciples to heal thy sorrow (or, disease), and also to give life to thee.—But after these letters, also, those follow them [that are written] in the Syriac tongue, [to the purport] that after Jesus had ascended he sent to him Judas...."